

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION	TEMPORARY CASH ASSISTANCE MANUAL	
APPLICATION PROCESS- 201	COMAR 07.03.03.04	APPLICATION- 200

201.1 RIGHT TO FILE

- A. An individual may file an application for TCA, whether potentially eligible or not.
- B. An individual applying for TCA may choose any person during any aspect of the application process to assist him/her.
 - 1. The local department of social services is responsible to provide access to an interpreter for applicants or recipients who do not speak English or have limited English proficiency (LEP). The interpreter may be:
 - a. A local department staff member
 - b. An individual outside the agency who is proficient in both English and the customer's language, or
 - c. An individual designated by the applicant.

NOTE: Local department staff may not ask LEP persons to use family members, especially children or friends, as interpreters. A customer's own interpreter should be used only at their request and when using that individual would not compromise the effectiveness of services or violate the LEP person's confidentiality.

- 2. When there is customer contact with the local department, regardless of who initiated the contact, the local department **must ask** the customer if the customer requires special accommodation because of a disability.
 - a. When the local department contacts the customer about a required interview, participation in a work activity or for other reasons, the local department **must advise** the customer that special accommodations will be made to assist the customer.
 - b. Customers who are not able to come to the LDSS or a vendor appointment because of a disability **must be** offered a phone interview, home visit or other accommodation.

201.2 APPLICATION FILING

- A. The applicant files for assistance on forms specified by the local department and approved by DHR
- B. The application process starts with a request containing, at a minimum, the applicant's name, address, and signature
- C. The applicant may use the screening form **DHR/FIA CARES 9711 Request for Assistance Form**, the application form **DHR/FIA CARES 9701 Application for**

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Assistance or the CARES generated form **Eligibility Determination Document (EDD)** or the **Service Access Information Link (SAIL)** on-line application.

- D. A local department staff member stamps the application with the date it is received, to record the filing date
- E. The filing date must be recorded if the minimum information (name, address, and signature) is completed, but the local department can have applicants complete all the information on the form
- F. A form is also generated by CARES after the case is screened
- G. Generate the rest of the application (EDD) from the data entered into CARES during the interview.
 - Have the customer sign the EDD (both parents must sign if both are in the home).
 - When there is telephone interview, print the EDD and mail it to the customer to sign and return.
- H. Make sure the customer understands his/her rights and responsibilities and signs the Rights and Responsibility document (either the DHR/FIA 9707 or the Rights and Responsibilities section of the 9701 application form)
- I. Use the **Paper Application Package (DHR/FIA CARES 9701)** when CARES is not in operation
- J. Accept applications during all of the local department's normal business hours
- K. Screen all applications for expedited Food Supplement benefits on the day the application is filed.
- L. Use telephone interviews as much possible.
 - Telephone interviews reduce the number of customers waiting in the office
 - Telephone interviews allow case managers more time to complete other work
- M. The applicant, an authorized representative, or someone acting responsibly for the applicant when that person is incompetent or incapacitated signs the application under penalty of perjury
- N. The basic components of the application process are the same in each local department, but the forms and sequence may differ

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201.3 COMPONENTS OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS

- A. A screener, who can not be the same Family Investment case manager who will be responsible for the eligibility decision, screens each individual on CARES
 - CARES security parameters do not allow the same person to screen and make the final eligibility decision.
- B. The screener enters basic identifying information into CARES and:
 1. Determines whether anyone on the application is known to the system
 2. Records any previously assigned Customer ID numbers for the applicants
 3. Determines possible programs for which the family may be eligible, and
 4. Prints out the system screening form for the applicant to sign
- C. A case manager conducts an interview with the applicant and:
 1. Determines, with the applicant, the help the family needs and the services which best meet those needs,
 2. Explores potential resources, including but not limited to:
 - a. Unemployment benefits
 - b. SSI
 - c. Social Security Benefits, including disability and survivor benefits
 - d. Workman's Compensation
 - e. Child Support
 3. Explores possible options
 - a. TCA is the option of last resort
 - b. Other options may include:
 - i. Personal resources
 - ii. Family resources
 - iii. Community resources
 - iv. Welfare Avoidance Grant (WAG)
 - v. Emergency Assistance

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- vi. Child Care and Medical Assistance
- vii. Other state and local benefits and services
- 4. Begins an assessment of the family's needs, strengths, resources, and abilities
 - a. An assessment may include testing or the use of other evaluation tools
 - b. Substance abuse screening is required for adult and minor parents
 - c. Family violence history for all families
- 5. Develops a mutually agreed upon Family Independence Plan (FIP) which outlines:
 - a. Family's goals
 - b. Steps to achieve the goals
 - c. Responsibilities of the applicant and local department to implement those steps
- 6. Provides written and verbal information about the:
 - a. Applicant's rights and responsibilities
 - b. Program requirements
 - c. Verifications needed
- 7. Offers each person, age 16 and above who is present, the opportunity to apply to register to vote
- D. All applicants who are not exempt need to begin moving toward independence during the application process by:
 - 1. Filing for and cooperating with Child Support Enforcement Services (CSES)
 - 2. Searching for a job
 - 3. Applying for other benefits to which they may be entitled
 - 4. Participating in a countable work activity
- E. The case manager must not have close association or kinship with any household member of the case.
 - 1. Where there is a close association or kinship the local staff must disqualify him or herself from the eligibility process.

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2. When this occurs, the local department must reassign the case to an impartial DSS staff member
3. The assigned staff may not seek information from or discuss the case with the disqualified staff.

F. The case manager makes the eligibility determination within 30 days.